



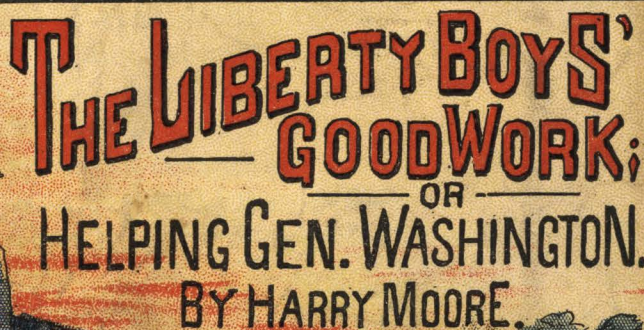
A Weekly Magazine containing Stories of the American Revolution.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year.

No. 3.

NEW YORK, JANUARY 18, 1901.

**Price 5 Cents.**

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# THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76.

A Weekly Magazine Containing Stories of the American Revolution.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE BOY SPY.

The British had occupied New York two weeks.

General Washington had been forced to fall back to Harlem Heights with the entire patriot army.

On the sixteenth of September the British had made an unsuccessful attack on the American forces on Harlem Heights, and had been repulsed with a loss of three hundred, the American loss being only about sixty.

In this engagement, one company, made up entirely of youths of about eighteen years of age, had distinguished itself by the individual bravery of the members.

This company had been made up from among the farmer boys living in the vicinity of Tarrytown, and a splendid lot of youths they were. They called themselves "The Liberty Boys of '76," and the way they fought proved conclusively that they were determined to have their liberty if intrepid daring and fierce fighting would win it.

The captain of the company was a handsome youth of eighteen years, named Dick Slater.

Dick, besides being captain of the company, had already distinguished himself as a spy.

Twice he had gone among the British on Long Island, and, at the imminent risk of his life, had secured information of great value to the commander-in-chief of the patriot army.

General Washington appreciated the work which had been performed by the youth.

More, he had begun to depend on the youth. Somehow, as he told the members of his staff, he felt that so long as he had Dick at hand to send into the British lines, he would be able to secure sufficient information relative to the intended movements of the British so that he would not be caught napping by them.

It seemed strange, at first thought, that the commander-in-chief should have such confidence in the abilities of a mere boy, as it were; but he based his judgment on the performances of the youth, who had been successful where some of the best men spies in the continental army had failed.

Indeed, Dick Slater had rescued two spies, who had been captured and held by the British.

As I have said, the British occupied the city of New York, the patriot army being stationed on Harlem Heights at the north end of Manhattan Island.

Two weeks had passed since the attack had been made on the Heights.

General Washington had waited for the British to renew the attack, but they had not done so.

They occupied a position in front of the Heights, cutting off the Americans from the city, even had they desired to go down there.

But they made no move toward making another attack.

The commander-in-chief of the patriot army could not think what the plans of the British generals could be.

They must be scheming—planning to do something.

He suspected that they would try to get around behind him, and attack his army from the rear, and cut off his retreat.

In fact, Dick had heard the generals planning to do this very thing; but for some reason they did not try it—or had not as yet.

Doubtless they knew that General Washington would be on the lookout for this move, as they were aware that an American spy had overheard them planning to do this.

When two weeks had elapsed, as stated, with no move by the British one way or another, the American commander-in-chief became anxious.

That they were planning some grand coup he felt confident, and he wished to know what their plans were.

There was but one way to learn aught of the plans of the British.

That was by sending spies down into the British stronghold.

The commander-in-chief sent for Dick Slater.

The youth responded to the summons promptly.

"Well, Master Dick," said General Washington, after he had greeted the youth pleasantly, "are you ready to enter upon an exceedingly dangerous undertaking?"

The youth bowed.

"I am ready, your excellency," he replied, quietly.



"You are willing to enter upon it, even though you know that it is an undertaking in which your life is in jeopardy from the moment you start upon it till it is finished?"

"I am, sir," replied Dick, with a modest air.

"Bravely spoken," the commander-in-chief said, approvingly. "I wish that I had more such youths in my army."

"I am always ready to do what I can for the Cause of Liberty, your excellency."

"I believe you; and I am going to make use of your services, Dick. You can help me greatly, I am sure."

"If I can, I will, sir. I wish to do all that I can to help you, and to aid in making the Great Cause successful."

"You have already proven it, my boy. Your work the two times I sent you over onto Long Island to spy among the British was so well and splendidly done that I have selected you for another very dangerous undertaking."

"Is it in the same line as the others, sir?"

"The same."

"Then you wish me to do some more spy work?"

"That is what I wish you to do, Dick."

"I am ready to go at a moment's notice, sir."

"Good! Then I will tell you just what it is that I wish you to do."

The commander-in-chief pondered a few moments, and then he said:

"As you know, my boy, the British generals have their headquarters down in the city."

"Yes, sir."

"I don't know just where their headquarters are, but you will be able to find where they are located without much trouble."

"I think so, sir."

"Very well; I wish you to go down there, find out where the headquarters of the British generals are, enter if possible, and learn all you can regarding the plans of General Howe."

"I will go at once, sir," said Dick, promptly.

"How will you get down to the city?" the general asked. "You know we are cut off by the British Army, which occupies a position in front of us, and stretching across the island."

"I am aware of that, sir; but I will get through some way."

Dick spoke confidently.

There was nothing of the bravado about it, however.

His tone and air simply expressed perfect confidence in his ability to do as he had said.

"You will have to be very careful, Dick."

The general's face expressed anxiety.

"I will be careful, sir."

"You must not allow yourself to be captured, my boy."

"I will not, sir, if I can possibly help it."

"I suppose you will wait till night to make the attempt at slipping through the British lines?"

"I judge it would be best, sir. I might be able to get through in the daytime, but it will be easier in the night."

"So I should think. Well, use your own discretion. I leave it all to you. Go ahead; stay within the British lines until you have secured what you consider important information, and then bring it to me."

"Very well; I will do so, sir."

Then Dick hesitated, and looked at the commander-in-chief in an undecided manner.

"What is it, Dick?" the general asked.

He saw that the youth had something on his mind.

Dick looked the great man frankly in the eyes, and replied:

"I wish to ask a favor, sir."

"It is granted before it is asked, my boy. What is it?"

Dick flushed with pleasure.

"Thank you, sir," he said; "what I wish to ask is that you permit my friend, Bob Estabrook, to accompany me. He is anxious to become a spy, and he wished me to ask you if he might accompany me the next time I went on an expedition of that kind."

The general looked sober.

"Is he a youth of good discretion, Dick?" he asked; "what I mean, in a word, is: Do you think you can do as good work with him along as you would be able to do alone?"

"Oh, yes; I am sure of it, sir," replied Dick; "and then, if I secure some information which I think you should have, and still wish to remain and try to learn more, I can send Bob to you with what I would have already gained, and stay and keep on the lookout for more."

"I see," said the commander-in-chief; "that is a good idea. Yes; take your friend with you."

"Thank you, sir! Bob will be delighted."

The commander-in-chief gave Dick his final instructions, and the youth took his leave.

He hastened back to where the company of "Liberty Boys" were quartered.

He was greeted by a bright-faced youth of about his own age.

This was Bob Estabrook, Dick's dearest boy friend, and the brother of Dick's sweetheart, sweet Alice Estabrook.



Bob was a wide-awake youth, full of fun and mischief, but as brave as Dick, or any youth could be.

"Where have you been, Dick?" he asked, eagerly.

"To see the commander-in-chief, Bob."

"What did he want, Dick?"

Bob was all excitement.

He suspected what it was that the general wished Dick to do.

"He wants me to go on another spying expedition, old man."

"I thought so!—and, Dick, did you say anything to him about me?"

Dick nodded.

"Yes," with a smile.

"Hurrah for you, old man! And—did he talk as if he would give me a chance?"

"Yes."

Dick liked to keep Bob on the anxious seat once in a while.

It was amusing to see how excited his friend would get.

"When will I get a chance to try my hand at spy work, do you think, Dick? Did he give any hint?"

"You are to go with me, Bob!" said Dick, quietly.

"What!"

Bob almost whooped the word.

He could hardly believe in his good fortune.

"Do you mean it, Dick?" he asked; "am I to go with you—really and truly?"

"Really and truly, Bob."

"Hurrah! Say, old man, you're a trump!" and then Bob danced a double-shuffle on the ground.

Dick looked on and smiled, while the other members of the company did the same.

"Say, Bob, you're a pretty good dancer," said Mark Morrison, a bright young fellow of Dick's and Bob's age. "You ought to become a dancing master."

"Not when the profession of spy is open to me," with a grin. "No, sir-ree! I'm one of the spies on the staff of the commander-in-chief of the American Army, and you needn't talk to me about dancing or anything like that! I'm a spy, and am going to penetrate into the headquarters of the British generals, and find out all they know and a lot they don't know."

"Especially the latter!" grinned Harry Wilberforce.

"No insinuations!" said Bob, in mock seriousness. "Remember who it is you are talking to, and beware!"

"I will!" with a laugh.

"But say, Dick, where are we going?" asked Bob; "down

into the city to the British headquarters, though, of course?"

"That is where we are going, Bob—if we can slip through the British lines, and get there."

"Oh, we'll get through the British lines, all right!"

Bob was confident.

It was his nature to be so.

In this he and Dick were very much alike.

But Dick was possessed of more deliberation, and was not so excitable.

Both were alike in that they were both as brave as lions.

It would have been hard to find two persons better fitted for the dangerous avocation of spies than these two youths.

"When will we start, Dick?" asked Bob.

"To-night, Bob."

"To-night? Good!"

"We will leave here as soon as it becomes dark. Then we will have to steal through the British lines, and get down into the city at as early an hour as possible."

"But, say, Dick, won't you be recognized, and get hung or shot?" asked Bob. "Those generals will know you when they see you, won't they?"

"They would if they saw me as I am now; but I will disguise myself in some manner."

"Ah, I see!"

"Yes; that's the reason I want to get down to the city as early as possible. I want to get there before the stores close, so I can get in and purchase a costume that will serve as a disguise."

"I see; well, I'll be ready to start when you say the word. "I'm ready right now!"

"We'll wait till dark," smiled Dick.

## CHAPTER II.

### THROUGH THE BRITISH LINES.

As soon as it was dark enough so that their movements would be hidden, Dick and Bob set out.

Leaving the quarters of the patriot army on Harlem Heights, they stole out and downward toward the British lines.

"We will have to be careful, Bob," said Dick. "We must not allow ourselves to be captured at the outset."

"That's right, Dick. Well, you take the lead, and I will follow, and do as nearly as possible everything you do."



Dick took the lead, and they stole cautiously forward. It was a case where haste was not so desirable as caution.

The youths knew where the British lines were.

When they reached the vicinity of where they were likely to run into outposts of the British, they redoubled their caution.

Dick led the way, and moved slowly, cautiously and silently as a red Indian of the forest.

Bob kept close behind him, and was as noiseless in his movements as was his companion.

Every few moments Dick would pause and listen intently.

He was not going to run into a British picket line if he could help it.

The youths were now on the comparatively level ground below Harlem Heights.

There was more or less growth of trees and bushes, and the boys took advantage of the cover of these trees and bushes.

It was much darker there, and while it would be harder for them to see the pickets, it would be harder for the pickets to see them.

Suddenly Dick's foot failed to find anything to arrest its descent, when he made a step forward, and before he could catch himself he became overbalanced and tumbled forward headlong.

A muffled exclamation escaped him as he fell, and then crash! he struck—not the ground, but something comparatively soft.

A wild shout of pain, rage and astonishment came from underneath the youth, and there was an upheaval that threw him off onto the ground.

"What does this mean? Great guns! but who are you that comes tumbling down on top of a fellow in such fashion, anyway!" the voice cried, and then strong hands grappled Dick.

The youth realized what had happened in an instant.

He had fallen into a little hollow, and had alighted plump on top of a British soldier, who was supposed to be on guard, but who was taking a quiet rest, stretched out on his blanket.

"I've got you!" the fellow growled, as his fingers closed on Dick's clothing, and he attempted to throw the youth down.

He found this was a difficult undertaking.

Dick was an athletic and powerful youth.

Few men were as strong as he.

So when the soldier attempted to throw Dick, the youth met him more than half way.

He seized the Briton in a peculiar manner which he had learned in wrestling, and before the fellow knew what had happened, he was thrown flat on his back with a thud.

Then Dick's muscular fingers seized the redcoat by the throat, and in half a minute the fellow was senseless.

By this time, Bob, greatly excited, was down in the hollow.

"Are you hurt, Dick?" he asked, in a low voice.

"No; I'm all right, Bob; but listen! Here come some more redcoats! They have heard the disturbance and are coming to investigate. Come!" and Dick seized Bob's arm, and they stole rapidly away through the underbrush.

"You—did you kill that fellow, Dick?" asked Bob.

"No; I just choked him till he was insensible. He'll be all right in a few minutes, and will tell his companions he was attacked, and the entire army will be aroused. We'll have to hurry, or we won't get through the lines."

The youths hastened onward.

They knew that they were in great danger of being captured.

And to be captured would mean death without a doubt.

Their progress could not be very swift, for the reason that it was very dark, and if they were to try to go fast, they would rattle the bushes, run into the branches of trees, and against the trees, and would make so much noise that their whereabouts would become known to their enemies.

A few minutes later excited voices were heard in the direction of the point where Dick had choked the redcoat into insensibility.

"The alarm will become general now," said Dick to himself. "The redcoats will soon be buzzing about our ears as thickly as hornets about their nest."

The youths hastened onward, and a few minutes later it seemed as if the entire British Army was astir.

On every hand could be heard excited voices.

Officers were giving orders to the soldiers, and it was evident that a general search would be made for the person who had choked the British soldier into insensibility within the British lines.

Doubtless the British suspected the truth of the matter.

It was a common thing for spies to try to get through the lines of the opposing armies, and they no doubt guessed that it was a spy who had handled the king's man so roughly.

On every side could be heard the voices of the British soldiers, and bodies of soldiers could be heard moving through the underbrush and timber.



The youths realized that they were in a tight place.

To escape capture would tax their ingenuity to the utmost.

They would have to be as cunning as the red Indians of the forest.

The youths were good in this respect.

They had considerable knowledge of woodcraft, as practiced by the red men.

They stole through the underbrush as noiselessly as spirits.

A dozen times they almost ran into the arms, figuratively speaking, of searching parties of British soldiers.

They could hear the redcoats talking on all sides of them.

But the youths kept their heads, and worked their way along.

They moved first one way, then another, but always managed to edge a little more toward the southward.

To get through the British lines they would have to go at least a mile.

In order to traverse this strip of ground, they must have walked two or three miles, for they went this way and that, occasionally being forced to take the back track for a short distance.

At last they were through, however—or they believed they were.

They paused and listened.

The sounds of the voices and the hurrying feet were all behind them.

"I guess we are safely through the lines at last," said Dick, with a sigh of relief.

"I guess so, Dick," replied Bob.

"That's where you are wrong!" came in an exultant voice from right in front of them. "Seize the spies, men!"

There was a rustling sound, made by the shuffling feet of a number of men, and the next instant the youths felt themselves seized by many hands.

"Fight them off, Bob!" cried Dick; "don't give up!"

The youths fought like tigers.

It was so dark they could not see their assailants, and, of course, the assailants could not see them. The redcoats had located them by their voices, and had succeeded in getting hold of the youths by leaping forward quickly, in obedience to the order of their commander.

But if they expected an easy conquest, they made a sad mistake.

Dick and Bob were both muscular youths, and as active as cats.

It was almost impossible to get them off their feet, and

for a few minutes there was a lively struggle there in the darkness.

Dick struck out right and left, and knocked several redcoats down, and Bob did the same.

The redcoats uttered curses, and tried all the harder to overpower the youths, who fought as much harder, and prevented this from being done.

Then, by rapid work and herculean efforts, Dick succeeded in getting away from those who had hold of him.

He leaped toward the spot where, he knew from the sound, Bob was engaged in a struggle with others of the redcoats.

"Break loose from them, Bob!" he cried; "I'm free!"

"All right; away we go, old man!" replied Bob, who succeeded in wrenching himself free, and the two youths leaped away through the trees and underbrush.

Curses, cries, and angry exclamations came from the baffled British soldiers, and the youths heard the officer cry:

"After them! Don't let the spies escape! We must capture them!"

Then the soldiers suddenly remembered that they had weapons, and fired a volley after the fleeing youths from their pistols.

The bullets whistled all around the youths, and Bob uttered an exclamation.

"Are you hit, Bob?" asked Dick, slackening his speed.

"No; a limb hit me in the eye!" was Bob's reply.

"Good! I'm glad of that!" cried Dick. "I was afraid you were struck by a bullet."

"It wouldn't have hurt any worse if I had been," said Bob.

"I don't know about that," said Dick; "but keep on running, old man. They'll fire another volley."

Which proved to be a correct prophecy.

The next instant, crash! went the weapons, and again the bullets whistled around the youths.

"Say, I don't like the sound of those bullets," said Bob.

"Neither do I," said Dick. "I don't think they will fire again."

This, too, turned out to be the case.

The youths kept on running until sure they were out of reach of any more bullets, should the British fire with their muskets, and then they slowed down to a walk.

It was dangerous work running, anyway—almost as dangerous as it would be to be captured, for they might run against a tree and kill themselves.

"I guess we are safe now," said Dick.

"I think we are through the lines, anyway," replied



Bob. "I don't know about the being safe part of it. They'll follow us, won't they?"

"They may try to do so, but they can't do it in this darkness."

"I guess you are right."

The youths made their way through the timber, heading as nearly due south as they could.

They were in what is now Central Park, and it was in almost its primitive state.

"How long will it take us to walk down to the city, Dick?" asked Bob, after they had plodded along for perhaps fifteen minutes.

"A couple of hours, Bob."

"Say, I wish we were there! It isn't much fun walking in the darkness, is it?"

"No; but it will soon be over. I am afraid, though, Bob, that we will get into worse difficulties when we reach the city than we are encountering here now."

"I don't doubt that, old man."

The youths kept on walking at as good a gait as they could travel, and at last the lights in the distance proclaimed the glad fact that they were nearing the city.

At the time of which we write the city proper extended only up to about where is now City Hall Park, this being called the Common.

Dick and Bob reached and crossed the Common, and were soon on Broadway.

They made their way slowly down the street, attracting no attention, as there were many people on the street.

They saw a great many British soldiers, resplendent in their red uniforms.

They were down in the city on leave of absence, and the majority were drinking and carousing.

"What if we should run onto some of the soldiers who know you, Dick?" asked Bob.

"It would be awkward, Bob," was the reply; "I don't think there is any danger, however."

Three or four redcoats were coming toward them as they spoke, and as the soldiers in question met the two youths, one got a look at Dick's face, and uttered a wild cry of surprise and joy.

"It's Sam Sly, the boy spy!" he cried. "Seize him, men! Seize him!"

### CHAPTER III.

#### A LIVELY CHASE.

Dick uttered an exclamation.

"It's Captain Parks!" he cried.

"Yes; and you are my prisoner, you cursed little rascal! You will not escape me this time!"

The men with the captain had been drinking.

This dulled their wits somewhat.

As a result, they had not grasped the situation quickly.

They could not understand right off what they were to do.

The youths were quick to make the most of this.

"At them!" cried Dick, in a sharp, determined tone; "give it to them, Bob!"

Then he leaped forward and knocked Captain Parks down with a well-directed blow.

Bob leaped forward at almost the same instant, and knocked one of the captain's followers down.

Then the youths served the others in the same way, before they could get an understanding of what was going on.

"Now run!" cried Dick; "we must get away from here in a hurry."

The youths darted away down the street.

A crowd began to gather when the scrimmage started.

The youths had to make their way through this crowd.

"What's the trouble?"

"What's going on?"

"Who are the boys?"

"Did they knock the soldiers down?"

"Stop them!"

Such were some of the cries from the spectators.

Only one fellow tried to stop them, however, and Dick knocked him down with a straight from the shoulder blow as he was running.

They had not gone fifty feet, however, before Captain Parks was on his feet.

He was wild with rage.

"Stop those boys! Catch them!" he shouted, wildly. "They are rebel spies! Five pounds to the man that catches the scoundrels!"

The captain's companions were scrambling to their feet now.

They were angry, too.

The blows and the falls they had received had sobered them somewhat.

They realized what had happened, and were wild to get revenge.

They followed the captain, and leaped in pursuit of the fleeing youths.

"Stop them, somebody!" the captain roared; "don't let the cursed rebel spies escape!"

But the fate that had befallen the one man who had



attempted to stay the flight of the youths threw a damper on the rest.

They were afraid they would receive the same treatment.

So they contented themselves with stepping to one side, out of the way, and leaving a clear field for the fugitives.

The youths kept on down Broadway.

They hardly knew what to do, whether to continue on down the street, or whether to turn off into one of the side streets.

The sight of a body of British soldiers coming up Broadway toward them soon decided the matter, and Dick said, hurriedly:

"Turn to the left, down the next street, Bob!"

"All right; you lead the way, and I'll keep right at your heels."

Captain Parks saw the other British soldiers approaching, and called out to them:

"Head those two fellows off! They are rebel spies!"

The redcoats came running toward the youths, intending to do as the captain had told them to do, but they were too late, and Dick and Bob darted down the side street while the redcoats were yet forty to fifty feet distant.

Captain Parks and his companions reached the entrance to the side street at the same time that the other soldiers got there.

They all turned into the street and ran after the youths as fast as they could.

"Fire upon the scoundrels!" cried Captain Parks. "There are no other persons in sight."

The soldiers obeyed, and the next instant the crack! crack! of the pistols was heard.

Several of the bullets whistled past the youths, and Dick cried:

"Turn at the next corner, Bob! Those fellows are liable to kill us if we don't!"

They darted around the corner at the next instant, and started south once more.

If the redcoats had intended firing another volley, they deferred it till they should reach the cross street, as the youths had turned and disappeared so quickly that they had not been able to draw and fire a second time.

The youths met numerous pedestrians on this street.

The running youths attracted attention, but no one attempted to interfere with them.

The youths were good runners.

Their wind was good, too.

In this respect they were the superiors of the redcoats.

The soldiers were becoming tired.

In fact, two or three of them had already fallen out of the race.

Captain Parks was about the most determined one of the lot.

He kept up the pursuit, at the same time urging his men to keep going.

"We'll capture the rascals yet!" he said, doggedly.

But the youths were as determined that they would not be captured.

They kept on running, and watched for a chance to disappear and hide till the storm blew over.

One thing they noticed was that they were getting into a locality where the British soldiers were more numerous.

They did not know it, but they were nearing the British headquarters.

The British generals had quarters in a leading tavern at the corner of Pearl and Dock streets.

The youths turned every corner they came to now, and finally managed to get started back in the direction they had come from.

Captain Parks and his companions were still sticking to it, and keeping up the chase, but had fallen back somewhat.

They kept yelling that the fugitives were rebel spies, however, and Dick and Bob were in danger of being hemmed in by British soldiers and captured.

As they were passing a building, a man who was standing in the open doorway called out:

"If you are patriots, come in here! I will hide you until the British soldiers give up the search."

The youths accepted the invitation.

They acted on impulse.

No thought that the fellow might be fooling them entered their minds.

The streets were so thronged with British soldiers that they feared they would be captured, and they accepted the first chance that offered.

The man stood aside until they had entered, and then leaped through after them, and closed the door.

"Follow me," the stranger said, and he led the way along a hall into a large room, which was well furnished.

The boys looked at their new-found friend with interest, there being a light in the room.

They saw that he was a man of advanced age—seemingly about fifty-five or sixty years of age.

He was a fine-looking gentleman, and the youths were impressed.

"Those British soldiers said you were patriot spies; is



it true that you are?" the gentleman asked, looking at the youths searchingly.

There was something in the man's appearance that inspired confidence, and Dick did not hesitate to answer in the affirmative.

"We are patriot spies," he replied.

"From the commander-in-chief's army?"

"Yes, sir—straight from there. We left there only three hours ago."

"And when will you return?"

"As soon as we have gained information which we deem of value, and think that General Washington should be put in possession of it."

"Good! I have some valuable information for the commander-in-chief, which I wish delivered to him before morning, if possible."

The youths were surprised.

They looked at the man with wondering interest.

"I'll take it to him!" said Bob, promptly.

At this instant there came a loud knocking at the front door through which the youths had so recently passed.

They leaped to their feet—they had taken seats at the gentleman's invitation—in alarm.

"We were seen to enter here!" said Dick; "we must not be found here! It would result in your death, sure!"

"Can we get out the back way?" asked Bob.

"Have no fears for either yourselves or me," with a quiet smile. "Sit here until I return. I will quickly send those fellows about their business."

The youths nodded acquiescence, and the gentleman left the room.

They heard him reach the front door and unbolt it.

Then they heard voices, but could not distinguish the words.

They held themselves in readiness to flee at a moment's notice, however, for they believed that the British soldiers would enter the house, and perhaps murder the old gentleman.

Nothing of the kind happened, however.

They heard the sound of voices in conversation for several minutes, and then the door closed with a slam, there was a rattle of the bolt, and then the sound of approaching footsteps—of but one person, however.

In some manner, by some device the old gentleman had kept the British soldiers from entering the house.

How had he done it?

The youths asked themselves this question.

But they could not answer it.

It was a mystery.

One which they could not penetrate.

The old gentleman must have discerned that they were nonplussed, for he smiled when he saw the wondering look on their faces.

"The British soldiers have gone," he said, quietly. "They will not bother you any more this night."

"How did you do it?" asked Dick.

"It was very easy," was the reply; "I am supposed to be a strong Tory, and one of the most loyal of all loyalists. My word is law, to a certain extent, and when I told the soldiers a few moments ago that I would be responsible for you, they had to be satisfied."

"And you are not a Tory?" asked Bob.

"Not now."

"There was an indescribable sadness to the tone of the old gentleman's voice as he said this.

"You were a Tory, then?" asked Dick.

"Until recently, yes; but now I am not. I am a patriot, and will do all I can to help defeat the British."

There was a sudden change to terrible fierceness in the old man's tone.

"There is some mystery here," thought the youths.

They were willing to let the matter rest, however, and accept the fact, without inquiring into the reasons for the same.

That the old gentleman had good reasons for his change of front they had no doubt.

And in this they were right.

At this instant they were startled by a series of screams.

The screams were in the voice of a woman.

They seemed to come from somewhere above.

Evidently from an upstairs room.

The youths looked at the old gentleman with startled eyes.

The old man was as pale as ashes.

He seemed to wither and shrink up.

He was trembling like a leaf.

"What was that?" asked Dick, in an awed voice. "Who screamed?"

## CHAPTER IV.

### A SAD CASE.

The old gentleman did not reply for a while.

He seemed to be debating something in his mind.

Then he suddenly came to a decision.



He motioned to the youths.

"Come with me," he said; "I will show you something."

There was a peculiarly sad tone to his voice, a pathetic look on his face.

The youths arose without a word and followed the old gentleman.

He led the way upstairs.

He did not stop at the top of the first flight.

He ascended to the next floor.

The youths kept close behind him, and he led the way to the end of the hall.

He took a key from his pocket, and started to unlock the door.

His hand shook so that he could hardly get the key in the keyhole:

The youths felt sorry for him.

Were they to learn the mystery of the screams?

They believed so.

The old man unlocked the door.

He did not open it at once.

Instead, he turned to the youths.

"A few minutes ago, downstairs, you asked me who uttered the screams which you heard," he said. "I am going to answer that question now, and after that you will understand why I have turned from a strong Tory to a patriot."

The youths bowed in silence, and then the old gentleman gently opened the door.

He stepped through the doorway, and motioned for the youths to follow.

They obeyed.

They stepped into the room, and looked about them.

The room was a good-sized one, and well furnished, but it was the occupant that attracted their attention.

The occupant was a young woman.

The youths believed she was young.

Her sunken cheeks and hollow eyes made her look more like some old woman, however.

Still, traces of beauty remained.

It was evident that she had been quite beautiful.

There was a strange, wild glare in the poor creature's eyes.

The youths knew intuitively that the young woman was insane.

She paid no attention to the old gentleman or the youths.

She sat in a low rocking-chair, and kept rocking and looking at the wall.

The old gentleman stepped to her side, and laid his hand on the young woman's head.

He stroked her hair with gentle touch.

"It is I, Gertrude; do you not know me?" the old gentleman asked, in a low, pathetic voice, and the girl turned her head and looked at the old man, but with no look of recognition.

Suddenly an angry light appeared in her eyes.

She leaped to her feet.

She pointed to the door.

"Go, Captain Frink!" she cried, her voice tense and hard; "you are false as false can be—a flirt and a scoundrel, and I hate you! Go!"

Then the girl sank back into the chair and burst into tears.

She wept passionately, and the old man tried to soothe her, but without avail.

The hearts of the youths bled for the old man and the young woman.

They began to suspect the truth.

The mention of the name of Captain Frink had surprised Dick greatly.

It had set him to thinking swiftly, also.

He remembered that the captain was a great flirt.

Dick had personal knowledge of the fact that the captain was making desperate love to a buxom young woman over on Long Island.

He suspected that this poor girl's trouble was of Captain Frink's making.

A mere flirt, he took a fancy to a pretty face, made love assiduously for a while, and then, tiring, he would leave the girl and turn to a new one.

It was Dick's belief that this was the captain's work.

The old man, finding he could do nothing to assuage the grief of the girl, turned sadly to the youths.

"A while ago," he said, "you asked me who uttered those screams. It was she—my daughter—who gave utterance to them."

"How long has she been so?" asked Dick, in a low tone.

"Only a short time; just since——" the old man hesitated. "You heard her mention the name of——"

"A flirt and a scoundrel!" said Dick. "I know Captain Frink, and I do not know any good of him."

"He is an utter scoundrel, as you say, young man. He taught my daughter to love him, and then coolly deserted her. Ah! I hate him! I hate him! And I hate the British now, one and all. Do you wonder that I have turned from Tory to patriot, when the British Army is made up of such scoundrels?"

The youths shook their heads.

"We do not wonder at it," said Dick.



Then the old gentleman led the way out of the room and back downstairs.

They became seated in the room which they had left a few minutes before.

The old man looked at the youths for a few moments in silence, and then drew a folded paper from the breast pocket of his coat.

He tapped it with his finger, and then said:

"I have been known as a strong Tory, and have enjoyed the confidence of the British officers. I have been enabled to know much regarding their plans, and I am still in that position, as they think me still loyal to the king.

"Since, however, the trouble came upon my daughter, I have been learning all that I could and writing it down. I wished to send it to the American commander-in-chief; but I have been unable to find anyone whom I could trust to carry it to him. Now, however, I shall intrust this document to you boys, and hope you will be able to deliver it to General Washington. It contains detailed statements regarding the plans of the British, as they have been formulated up to the present date."

"We will take the document," said Dick, quietly, "and we will deliver it into General Washington's hands, if it is possible to do so."

"I understood you to say you had already slipped through the British lines once to-night, did I not?" the old gentleman asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Then surely you can make your way back through the lines again."

"I think we can, sir. We had quite a lively time of it coming, as we were fired upon, and had a couple of little brushes with the redcoats; but I think we can go back through. We are ready to make the attempt, anyway."

The old man looked at the youths critically.

"Did the commander-in-chief send you?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," replied Dick.

"How came he to send boys? Has he no men spies?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"They were busy elsewhere?"

"I don't know as to that, sir. The general seems to have confidence in us."

"He has already done considerable successful spy work for the commander-in-chief," said Bob, nodding toward Dick. "The general thinks that boys are better for the work, on account of the fact that they are not so likely to be suspected."

"That is true, but you boys seem to have been not only suspected, but known."

"Yes; Captain Parks knows me well," said Dick; "and we happened, unfortunately, to meet him face to face on the street. Of course, he recognized me, and tried to capture us."

"I see; well, it is fortunate I happened to be standing in my front doorway and heard the British shouting that you were rebel spies. Otherwise, they might have captured you."

"True," said Dick.

Bob nodded assent.

"You will try to carry this document to the American commander-in-chief?" asked the gentleman.

"Certainly, sir."

"How soon will you start?"

"As soon as we have had a bite to eat. We are tired and hungry, and by the time we have eaten we will be rested."

The youths had expected to go out to a tavern, but the old gentleman insisted that this would be dangerous, as they might be recognized, and the youths agreed with him in this, and decided to let him furnish the luncheon.

The old man hastened away to give the order, leaving the youths to ponder over the strange and lively adventures of the evening.

They were glad they had fallen in with this old gentleman.

It would result in relieving them of the necessity of penetrating to the headquarters of the British generals.

The old man was already in possession of the very information that they would have been forced to risk their lives to gain.

"Will we both return to camp, Dick?" asked Bob.

"I've been thinking, Bob, and I've made up my mind that it would be a good plan for me to stay here, and keep an eye open for new developments—that is, if you think you can get back to camp with the document alone."

"I can try mighty hard, Dick."

"And I think you can make a success of it, too."

"I hope so."

"The British won't be expecting that anyone will be trying to get through their lines from the south, and they won't be on the lookout."

"Oh, I'll get through the lines, all right, or know the reason why."

The old gentleman returned presently.

"Luncheon will be ready in a few minutes," he said.

Then he told the youths his name, which was John Paul Sanderson, and he told them that his home should be open to them at any and all times, when they were in the city on spying expeditions.



The youths thanked him heartily.

Presently a servant entered and announced that the luncheon was ready.

Dick thought the fellow looked at Bob and himself rather searchingly, but did not think much about it at the time.

Just as they were leaving the room to go to the dining room there came another series of screams, and the youths shuddered.

The old man turned pale, and put out his hand to the wall to steady himself. His knees seemed about to give way beneath him.

The youths pitied the poor man from the bottom of their hearts.

"What a scoundrel that Captain Frink must be!" thought Dick. "He ought to be hung! I'm glad that I had the satisfaction of putting a pistol bullet in his cheek a few weeks ago, and spoiling some portion of his good looks."

The youths seated themselves at the table and ate heartily.

They were hungry, and the food was plentiful and good.

When they had finished, they accompanied the old man back to the room they had been in before, and Mr. Sanderson gave Dick the document he had shown them.

"Now, be sure and deliver that to General Washington," the old man said.

"We will do so, if such a thing is possible," said Dick.

The old man told them to wait a minute.

He left the room.

He was gone perhaps five minutes.

There was a sober look on his face when he returned.

"I think the house is watched by soldiers," he said.

"Captain Parks must have placed them on guard."

"How did you keep him from entering in the first place?" asked Dick.

"As I told you, I have authority as being one of the leading Tories, and I stood good for your safe keeping."

"What will you do when they ask you to produce us?"

"I will say that you have escaped."

"That is a good idea."

"Yes; you will have to leave by way of the rear exit."

"Very well."

Mr. Sanderson himself accompanied them to the back door, and there bade them good-by and Godspeed.

Then he shut the door, and the youths stole away out through the yard to the alley, and then down the alley toward the street.

Suddenly Dick, who looked back two or three times, made a startling discovery:

A man was following them!

He cautiously informed Bob of this fact.

"Who can it be?" Bob asked.

"I don't know," replied Dick; "but," he added, determinedly, "I'm going to find out very soon."

Dick quickly decided on a plan of action.

That was one of Dick's strong points.

He was quick to decide and prompt to act.

## CHAPTER V.

### DICK AND BOB PART.

"Here, Bob, take this document," he said.

He cautiously pressed the document he had received from Mr. Sanderson into Bob's hand.

"Put it in your pocket," he continued.

Bob did so.

"Now, I'll tell you what you do, Bob: You leave me as soon as we reach the main street, and start on your way back to the patriot army."

"And what will you do, Dick?"

"I will remain here and keep watch of things for a day or two."

"But what about this fellow behind us?"

Bob's tone was anxious.

He was afraid something serious might happen to Dick.

"Oh, I'll look after him!"

"But he may look after you!"

"I am not afraid. I am able to take care of myself—and that fellow, as well."

"You will be careful, though, Dick?"

"Oh, I shall be careful. I am not going to let anyone get the better of me, if I can help it."

"What if the fellow should follow me?"

"I'll see to it that he doesn't, Bob."

They had reached the street by this time, and turned into it, heading toward the Common at the north end of Broadway.

Dick had kept a sharp lookout behind him.

He saw that the man was still following them.

There were a good many people on the street, late as was the hour.

Dick easily picked out the man who was following them,



however, and when the fellow passed under a street lamp, Dick made a second discovery.

The man following them was the servant who had looked at them so searchingly in the house of Mr. Sanderson!

Dick was sure of it.

"What could it mean?" Dick asked himself.

Had Mr. Sanderson sent the fellow to follow them for some reason?

Dick could hardly believe this.

If not, then the fellow was doing it on his own account.

If so, why was he doing it?

The youth could not even guess.

He made up his mind to take every precaution to fool the fellow, however.

"Bob," he said, in a low tone, "that fellow may be wanting to get hold of that document. In that case, he must not know you have it. I'll tell you what you do. At the next street, you turn off and go a block in that direction, and then continue onward toward the north."

"What will you do, Dick?"

"I will continue on up Broadway, and that fellow will, I am confident, follow me."

"And if he doesn't?—if he follows me?"

"Then I will fall in behind, and follow him."

"I see; well, all right. I will do as you say."

"Very well; and, Bob, you must be very careful in getting through the British lines. Don't let them nab you."

"I won't, Dick. This is my trial trip, you know, and if I should fail in my first work, General Washington would not be willing to risk me again. If I don't place the document in the hands of the commander-in-chief it will be because I have been killed by the redcoats!"

There was a terrible earnestness to the youth's tone.

When Bob was sober he was very sober indeed.

This is characteristic of persons of lively and volatile temperament the world over.

At the next corner Bob said "Good-by, Dick!" in a low tone, and turned down the cross-street.

Dick replied in the same cautious tone: "Good-by, and good luck, old man!" and kept straight onward, up Broadway.

He cast frequent glances over his shoulder.

He was anxious to see what the fellow would do.

The man who had been following the youths paused for a few moments at the cross-street.

He looked down the street after Bob, and then up Broadway in the direction Dick had gone.

He seemed undecided which to follow.

Presently he faced about and came on up Broadway.

He had decided to follow Dick.

Doubtless he thought Dick was the more important one of the two.

Dick observed this maneuver.

He was well pleased.

He had feared the fellow might follow Bob.

This he would not have liked at all.

He wanted Bob to have a clear field, in order that nothing should interfere to keep him from making his way as rapidly as possible toward the patriot army on Harlem Heights.

"Well and good, my fine fellow!" murmured Dick. "I am glad you have followed me; and I will give you a merry chase of it."

Dick had no fear of the man who was following him.

He felt himself more than a match for almost any one man.

Then, too, he was armed with two good pistols.

These were war times, and Dick felt that he would be justified in shooting a man, if it was necessary to do so.

Of course, he would do so only as a last resort, and strictly in self-defense.

Dick outlined his plan as he walked.

He kept straight on up Broadway till he reached the Common.

He crossed the Common and struck into Bowery Lane.

The man followed him, but had fallen back to a greater distance.

In the open he did not dare keep close behind the youth.

Dick walked along quite rapidly.

The fellow kept at about the same distance behind him.

Presently Dick entered a patch of timber.

"This will be just the place," the youth thought.

He walked on till he had penetrated to a depth of a hundred yards.

It was quite dark, of course.

He could not see his pursuer, and, of course, the man could not see him.

Dick stepped to one side and waited.

Soon he heard footsteps approaching.

"He is coming!" the youth thought.

Presently the man drew near, and then came opposite the youth.

Dick could not see the fellow, but could tell by the sound of his footsteps.

"I will have to hurry," the fellow said aloud; "I will have to get close behind him—close enough to hear his footsteps, or I will lose him. Phew! it's dark! One can't see his hand before his face."



The fellow passed onward, and Dick stepped noiselessly into the road behind his pursuer, and followed him, being guided easily by the sound of the footsteps.

The follower was himself being followed.

"What can the fellow be up to?" the youth wondered. "He is a schemer of some kind, and is deceiving Mr. Sanderson. It would not surprise me if he was a spy on the old gentleman, and trying to get evidence against him, in order to work him harm."

Suddenly Dick was startled by a yell of surprise and fright.

The yell came from in front, and was evidently given utterance to by the fellow he was following.

Then ensued the sound of scuffling.

Cries and curses were heard.

Evidently the fellow had run into an ambuscade of some kind.

Dick thought of how he might have done this, and was thankful that he had fallen behind and let the other fellow fall into the trap.

"If the fellow was worthy I would go to his assistance," the youth thought; "but he is, I am confident, a scoundrel, and will have to look out for himself. Besides, he is a British spy or sympathizer, I am sure, and if the attacking party is made up of British soldiers he will be set free."

Dick stole forward as rapidly as was compatible with noiselessness.

He was soon within a few yards of the scene of the struggle.

The combat in the dark came to a sudden end.

There were several in the attacking party, as Dick could tell by the voices, and they had made short work of the one man.

"Don't kill me!" Dick heard the fellow say; "I am a loyal king's man, and if you won't hurt me I will tell you something. I will give you some valuable information."

"Well, let's hear what your valuable information is," said a gruff voice.

"And you won't kill me?"

There was a whining intonation to the fellow's voice that branded him as being one of those miserable cowards who, when danger threatens them, will do anything to save their own miserable lives.

"No; we won't kill you. Give us the information. We are British soldiers, and if you are loyal to the king you are in no danger. If you have any information which would be of value to the British cause, you are in duty bound to divulge it."

"All right; I'll do it. I was following a rebel spy when you leaped upon me and captured me."

"Impossible!" said the same voice that had done most of the talking.

"Why impossible? I swear to you, gentlemen, that I speak the truth."

"But it can't be the truth!"

"And why not?"

"For the reason that we have been here for two hours or more, and no one has passed here, until you came!"

"What!"

Evidently the prisoner was surprised.

"You must be mistaken," he added.

But the British soldiers insisted that they were not mistaken, and, as the reader knows, they were not.

"We are not mistaken," was the cold reply; "I guess you are lying to us!"

But the fellow declared vehemently that he was telling the truth, and he told the whole story, of how he was a servant in the household of a Mr. Sanderson, down in the city, that the two boys had come there, and had been given a paper of some kind to take to the American commander-in-chief, he having learned this much by eavesdropping, and of how he had followed the two youths when they left the house, and everything.

The British soldiers came to the conclusion, evidently, that the fellow spoke the truth, for the leader asked:

"You were following this young fellow, and he entered Bowery Lane?"

"Yes."

Then he must have suspected that he was followed, and slipped aside into the bushes, letting you pass. He is probably going through the timber laughing in his sleeve at the trick he played you."

"If he didn't pass here, that must be the case."

"Well, he didn't pass here; and he won't pass here."

"And you will set me free now?"

"Yes; for we want you to go back to the home of this man, Sanderson, and try to secure some evidence that will convict him of being a rebel, and that he is lending spies aid."

"All right; I will do it, and I'll catch him, too, before very long. He is a traitor, I know."

"And will be treated as one should be treated, too, just so soon as you secure the evidence to support your statements."

"So that is your game, is it, my fine fellow?" thought Dick; "well, I will see if I can't block it."



Then Dick turned and started back down Bowery Lane at as rapid a walk as was consistent with safety.

He reached the Common soon, and hastened to get across it before the British should emerge from Bowery Lane.

Turning down Broadway, Dick hurried along.

He walked rapidly.

Fearing that he might encounter someone who might be familiar with his looks, he kept his hat pulled well down over his eyes.

He turned into the street leading to the alley running in the rear of Mr. Sanderson's house.

Entering the back yard, he approached the back door.

He reached out and rapped loudly with his knuckles.

He paused and awaited for some sound from within.

None came.

He rapped on the door again.

"I wish he would hurry!" murmured Dick; "I want to get in before that scoundrel gets back."

At this instant the youth felt himself seized by a dozen hands!

## CHAPTER VI.

### CAPTURED!

The youth was taken entirely by surprise.

He had not been expecting anything of the kind.

He had supposed himself free from observation.

So he was taken by surprise, and at a big disadvantage.

He would not submit tamely to capture, however.

It was his nature to show fight, and fight to the last.

So he began struggling to release himself.

He fought furiously.

That his assailants were British soldiers he had no doubt.

He could see them only faintly, but it was reasonable to suppose that they were members of the British Army.

Dick made things extremely lively for a few moments.

The odds were too great, however.

He could not hope to make a successful resistance against a dozen.

So the inevitable soon happened.

He was forced to the ground, and held there.

Then his hands were tied together behind his back.

Next he was jerked to his feet.

"Come along!" said a gruff voice, and the youth was pulled along between a couple of his captors.

They passed out of the yard into the alley.

They went down the alley to the street.

As they were turning into the street, they came face to face with another small body of British soldiers.

In their midst was the tricky servant of Mr. Sanderson.

A light at the street corner made it fairly light where they were.

The servant recognized Dick at the same instant that the youth recognized him.

The fellow gave a start, and uttered an exclamation.

"There is the fellow I was following!" he cried; "it's the same chap! I can swear to it!"

"The one your boss gave the paper to?" asked the soldier beside him.

"The very same fellow."

"What is all this about?" asked one of the fellows who had captured Dick. "What is the matter with that fellow?"

Then the other soldier explained.

"I guess the fellow is right," the leader of Dick's captors said, when he heard all; "this chap just now came to the back door of Sanderson's house, and we captured him."

"He doubled and came right back to where he started from."

"And ran into a trap!"

"Yes; we'll get the paper now. We'll search him at once."

They proceeded to do so.

They found the youth's pistols the first thing.

"Phew! the little rebel is well armed, anyway!" exclaimed one of the soldiers.

"That's right."

"I'll wager he would be afraid to fire the pistols off!"

Dick had so far listened to all that was said, but had maintained silence himself.

Now his lips curled scornfully, as he said:

"Do you think so?"

"Yes; I think so," was the reply.

"Well, that is where you make a mistake," quietly; "more than one redcoat has felt bullets that came from those pistols—and I think many more will undergo the same experience before this war ends!"

"Phew! What a little gamecock he is!"

"He is dangerous, isn't he?"

"If brave talk was dangerous, he would be."

The redcoats laughed mockingly, and made sport of the youth, who regarded them with eyes of scorn.

"You are a pack of cowards!" he said; "a dozen of you



leap upon the back of one man, and because you overcome him, you think you are great!"

"He called himself a man!—ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, he has a good opinion of himself!"

"Like the majority of the rebels!"

"But they'll get over that soon!"

"They will, of a certainty!"

The soldiers laughed and jeered at the youth while the soldier was feeling in Dick's pockets for the paper which the servant of Mr. Sanderson said they would find.

But they did not find it.

It was in the pocket of Bob Estabrook, as the reader knows, and Bob was, Dick hoped, far on his way toward the camp of the patriot army on Harlem Heights.

"There's no paper here!" said the fellow, in a disappointed tone, after having felt in vain in every one of Dick's pockets.

"What!" exclaimed the servant, aghast.

"Are you sure?" he asked.

He could not believe that the other had searched thoroughly.

"Sure!" was the reply. "I've felt in every pocket."

"There must be a secret pocket."

"How big a paper was it?"

"Oh, quite a large one."

"He hasn't it, then. I have felt of his clothing, and there is no paper on his person."

This was a poser for the servant.

He had confidently expected that they would find the paper which he had seen Mr. Sanderson give to Dick.

Then a sudden thought struck him, and he uttered an exclamation.

"I understand it now!" he cried; "the other boy has the paper!"

"What other boy?" was asked.

Then the servant explained that there had been two of the youths, but that they had parted up on Broadway, and he had followed Dick, because he had seen him receive the paper from his employer.

"He gave it to the other boy before they parted," the scoundrel said; "I see it all now."

"When it is too late!" from one of the soldiers, in a disappointed tone.

"Maybe it isn't too late!" cried the servant, eagerly; "maybe you can catch the other boy yet! He is afoot, and it is a long ways to the rebel army. He could be headed off."

"There is some sense in that suggestion," agreed one of the soldiers.

"So there is," from another.

"We must have the paper, if it is possible to get it!"

"Yes; it no doubt contains information that would be of great value to the rebels, and do great damage to the British."

"Yes; and it would prove that Sanderson is a rebel, and working against the king."

"So it would, without a doubt."

"But how will we do the trick?" asked one. "The young fellow has a big start, and it will be hard to find him in the dark."

"He will have to slip through the lines of our army to reach his own army," said another; "and we can get horses and reach our lines ahead of him, and warn them to be on the lookout for him. It will be almost an impossibility for him to slip through, then."

"That's a good scheme!"

"So it is!"

The soldiers talked it over, and decided to send a couple of their number on horseback to the British Army before Harlem Heights, and warn them that a spy would try to slip through, while the rest would take the prisoner before General Howe at headquarters.

Dick's heart sank when this was decided upon.

It would be hard enough for Bob to slip through the British lines, even when they were not expecting him.

But to be warned in advance, and be on the lookout would give them a big advantage, and the youth would be in great danger of being captured.

"It was bad, my allowing myself to be captured!" Dick thought. "I don't care so much on my own account, but it will place Bob in a dangerous position."

He learned from the conversation of the soldiers that they would get the horses at headquarters, and wished that he might get free, secure a horse and ride after Bob, and warn him of the danger he would be running into.

Dick began working at the rope which bound his wrists. The rope had not been tied very tightly.

His heart leaped, as the thought came to him that he might be able to work it loose.

He was not sure that he could do so.

He would try, however.

He worked away at the rope, as he walked along.

The movement of his body in walking concealed the fact that he was doing anything of the kind.

It was about three blocks to the tavern where the British generals had their headquarters.

Dick wished it was farther.

He had improved the time, however.



The rope was quite loose.

He thought that he might free his arms by a vigorous effort.

The two soldiers who were to ride northward to the British lines and inform them that the spy was to try to get through the lines had hastened forward ahead of the rest.

They had secured two horses, and led them around from the rear of the tavern, where there was a barn, to the front, as the soldiers with Dick in their midst reached the tavern.

A number of British officers had come out on the front stoop of the tavern.

They heard the story of Dick's capture from the two who had come for the horses, and were eager to get a look at the prisoner.

Among them Dick saw and recognized Generals Howe and Clinton.

Captain Frink was there, also.

They saw him, and a cry of astonishment and joy went up from them.

"It is Sam Sly, the boy spy!" cried Captain Frink.

"Ah, ha! We have him this time!" cried General Howe.

"Don't be too sure of it!" cried Dick, in a ringing voice; "I will fool you, just for luck!"

Dick gave a sudden, terrible wrench at his bonds, as he spoke.

He succeeded in freeing his arms.

Then he jerked loose from the two soldiers who had hold of him.

Those two worthies were looking at the great generals and smiling with complacency, and, imagining that the youth would not think of trying to escape, were holding him very carelessly.

The result was that Dick was free from their clutches before they knew what had happened.

The two soldiers who were to ride to the British lines and warn the troops that a spy was coming to try to slip through their lines, stood in front of the tavern, holding their horses by the bits.

They had waited to see the arrival of the spy, and exult over him.

Which was where they made their mistake.

With a wild yell of defiance, Dick ran straight toward these two soldiers.

So astounded were they by the strange turn the affair had taken that they stood and stared at the advancing youth in open-mouthed amazement.

They seemed incapable of making a movement.

Those on the stoop were almost paralyzed by the occurrence.

The unexpectedness of the thing, and the audacity of the wonderful youth struck them dumb, and rendered them for the moment incapable of action.

It was the same with the soldiers from whom Dick had escaped.

They stood still, and stared after him, open mouthed.

Dick was upon the two soldiers in a twinkling.

First his right, and then his left fist shot out.

Each fist landed fairly between the eyes of a soldier.

Down the fellows went, like stricken hogs.

Dick seized both bridle reins.

With a bound he leaped into the saddle of one of the horses.

He gave a yell, at the same time kicking one horse in the side, and hitting the other with the end of the rein, and the horses leaped away up the street.

"Good-by! I'll see you some other time, when I have more time!" the youth cried. "Good-by!"

The thunderstruck generals and soldiers suddenly came to with a start.

They were wild with rage.

"Shoot him!—kill him!" cried General Howe, hopping about and waving his arms. "Kill the impudent spy! Don't let him escape!"

Captain Frink drew a pair of pistols and fired a couple of shots, and several of the soldiers followed suit.

None of the bullets hit the youth, however, seemingly, for he turned in the saddle and waved his hat in the air and emitted a shout of defiance.

There was a scene of the wildest excitement in front of the tavern, after Dick disappeared around the corner.

The generals were almost black in the face, so great was their rage.

The two men who had been knocked down had struggled to their feet, and they gazed about them in a bewildered manner that was comical to see.

Captain Frink—who was an old enemy of Dick's, the youth having shot the captain in the cheek in an encounter a few weeks before—gave utterance to curses, not loud, but deep.

"Fiends take such luck!" he cried; "that young scoundrel seems to bear a charmed life!"

"I would give a hundred pounds to have the young rascal in my power right now!" sputtered General Howe.

"He is certainly the most daring and successful spy in the rebel army," said General Clinton.



"He must be captured and confined, or shot!" said Howe.

"Hang the young rascal!" said Frink, savagely; "don't 'confine' him."

"That is what should be done with him," agreed Clinton.

"Does thet thar offer uv er hundred poun's stan', gineral?" asked a voice, in a sharp, nasal tone.

The speaker was a rough-looking, uncouth individual, with long hair, a cap made from the skin of a wild animal, and he was dressed in a hunter's suit.

This man was Luke Watson, a hunter, who made his home up in the wilds of Westchester county. He had entered the service of the British for pay, as guide and spy.

He was well known to General Howe, who regarded Luke as a very valuable man.

"The offer stands, Luke," replied the general; "bring that young scoundrel to me, here, and I will pay you one hundred pounds."

"Done, gineral!" was the reply; "I'll git 'im fur ye!"

Then Luke Watson turned abruptly, and strode away up the street.

"Luke will get him if anybody can," said Captain Frink.

## CHAPTER VII.

### REDCOATS GALORE.

Dick felt a wild thrill of delight as he rode away on the horse he had taken away from the British soldier.

He had the other one, leading it by the bridle reins, so no immediate pursuit of him could be inaugurated.

"That was a close call," the youth thought; "I thought I was in a hopeless predicament that time, but I came out all right. I will have to be more careful not to attract the attention of some strolling gang of redcoats, however."

The youth rode rapidly till he reached Broadway.

Then he slowed down.

He did not wish to attract attention.

Late as it was—it being now about eleven o'clock—the street was still thronged with people.

When he came opposite the home of Mr. Sanderson a thought struck him.

After the kindness that had been shown himself and Bob that evening by the old gentleman, it would be no more than fair to warn him of the character of the servant in his employ.

The fellow was a snake in the grass.

He would spy on Mr. Sanderson, secure evidence against

him, sooner or later, and cause the old gentleman lots of trouble.

Dick did not hesitate.

He believed he was safe from pursuit for a while at least.

So he turned into the cross-street, rode down it to the alley running at the rear of Mr. Sanderson's house, and up the alley till opposite the rear entrance to the house.

Then Dick leaped to the ground.

He tied the horses, and entered the back yard.

He approached the back door.

He was very cautious this time.

He had been captured in that very yard not half an hour before, and he did not mean to allow the same thing to happen again.

He kept a sharp lookout around him.

He could not see much, and he heard nothing suspicious.

He reached the rear door and knocked upon it.

He had to knock three times before there came any sound from within.

Then he heard footsteps approaching.

The rattle of bolts was heard as they were withdrawn from their sockets.

Then the door opened.

It was Mr. Sanderson, who stood there with a candle in his hand.

"Who is it—ah! is it you, my young friend?" in a surprised tone. "Why have you returned? Surely you have not failed?"

There was a frightened intonation to the man's voice, as well as a surprised one.

"No," replied Dick; "my friend has gone on with the document you gave us," and then he went ahead and related his adventures since leaving the house a few hours before.

He was as brief as possible, and talked rapidly.

The old gentleman was astonished when told that his man servant was a scoundrel, and spying on him.

"The rascal!" he exclaimed; "well, I am glad I know it! I would soon have been in deep trouble, otherwise."

"So you would, sir."

"I shall be more careful, henceforth; and the first thing I shall do will be to discharge the fellow."

"Yes; I wouldn't have him around."

"Listen!" the old man suddenly said, in a low, cautious tone; "somebody is coming up the alley!"

"There are more than one!" said Dick.

"So there are! You had better fly, my boy. It may be soldiers in search of you."



"It is more likely your servant returning," the youth replied.

"True; but there is at least one man with him; so you had better hasten from this place."

"I will go at once; good-night!"

"Good-night," and the old gentleman stepped back within the house and closed the door.

The back yard was encompassed about with a high board fence, the boards being placed lengthwise, and close together. But for this the men coming up the alley would have seen the old man standing in the doorway, holding the candle.

Dick hastened across the yard, and out into the alley.

There were two of the men, and they were close upon him.

Dick recognized the voice of the false servant of Mr. Sanderson.

There was a man with him, doubtless a soldier sent to keep watch over the house.

In fact, this was the case, as the youth learned from their conversation.

They were talking of him, and discussing the wonderful escape.

Evidently the prowess of the youth had made a deep impression upon them.

"Who would have thought that a mere boy would be such a dangerous customer?" the soldier remarked, as they drew near.

"No one; I thought we had him tight and fast."

"So did I."

At this instant one of the horses stamped his foot and neighed.

The two men uttered exclamations of astonishment.

"A horse!" exclaimed the soldier.

"Say," said the servant, in a low, excited tone, "I'll wager that that young scoundrel is in the house at this moment, talking to that old traitor!"

"Do you think so?"

The soldier's voice was eager now.

"I am sure of it! I'll wager that there are two horses tied here in the alley, and that they are the two that were made off with by the boy spy."

"Let's investigate!"

"All right!"

It was so dark in the alley that the horses could not be seen.

The two men would have to pursue their investigations by the sense of feeling.

Dick stood near the head of the horses, awaiting the approach of the two.

He possessed an advantage over them.

The street into which the alley ran was only about forty yards distant, and a street lamp up at the corner threw some light down the street.

It was not much, but it was enough so that Dick could see the forms of the two men dimly outlined against the faint light background caused by the street lamp.

"I'll just give you two fellows a surprise!" he thought, and with every nerve on the alert, with every muscle set, he waited for them to come within reach.

"If I don't give you fellows the headache, it will be funny!" he said to himself, grimly. "I owe that sneaking servant one, and I always pay my debts. The other fellow will have to suffer for being caught in bad company."

Dick felt no fear regarding the result of an encounter between himself and the two men.

He considered himself a match for almost any two ordinary men under any circumstances, and now he would have the advantage of taking them by surprise.

He could knock one of them out before the other would realize what was happening.

He stood silent and motionless, and waited for the moment when they should come within reach of his good fists.

Closer and closer they came.

They approached very slowly, as they were literally feeling their way.

Doubtless they feared the horses might kick them if they were too abrupt in their approach.

They now began talking reassuringly to the horses.

"Whoa, boy! Good boy!" they said several times.

"It'll be 'woe' to you boys the first thing you know!" thought Dick, grimly, and he braced himself, ready to deal the knockout blows.

Presently the fellows were within reach.

Dick had identified the unfaithful servant by his voice.

He decided to give this fellow the first blow.

Drawing back his right arm, the youth let drive.

His arm shot forward with mathematical precision, and with the force of a battering-ram.

Dick's fist took the servant fairly between the eyes.

The fellow gave utterance to a cry of amazement and pain, and down he went like a log.

Crack!

Again Dick's fist shot out, and down went the other fellow.

Dick had struck with all his might.



The blows were not knockouts, however; they had not landed on the right spots for that.

A knockout must land on the jaw, if delivered about the face at all.

The fellows were dazed, however.

They saw more stars than they had ever dreamed of seeing.

Their wits were scattered to the four winds, temporarily.

Dick sprang to the horses' heads, and untied the halter straps.

He had tied the straps in such a manner that a single jerk was all that was needed to untie them.

With a bound he was in the saddle of the nearest horse.

Then he rode down the alley at a gallop, turning the corner into the street just as the two men were struggling to their feet.

The soldier was the first to get to his feet, and he fired a shot at Dick.

The bullet went wild, however.

Dick gave a derisive shout.

"You couldn't hit the side of a barn, redcoat!" he cried. "Try it again!"

But Dick was out of sight before the fellow could fire again.

The youth reached Broadway, and turned north.

He rode along at a gallop.

People looked at him with some show of curiosity, but no one hailed him.

Dick was feeling pretty good.

He had made his escape from the British, and had taken a couple of good horses with him.

Horses were worth considerable.

"I wish I could get these horses through the lines!" the youth thought. "They would come in handy for some of the patriot officers to use."

Reaching the Common, Dick rode across it.

He headed for Bowery Lane.

As he rode into the lane, he suddenly heard the word, "Halt!"

The voice came from the side of the road.

It was stern and threatening in tone.

But Dick was not inclined to halt.

He was headed for the patriot army on Harlem Heights, and he was going to reach the army if possible.

So instead of halting, he dug his heels into the side of the horse he bestrode, gave a yell to the other horse, and the animals leaped away at a swift gallop.

Crack! crack! crack! crack! crack! went the muskets. Dick heard one or two bullets whistle past his head.

"That's pretty good shooting for this dark night!" the youth murmured grimly. "Well, I don't think they can come that close again."

There were no more shots, however.

"A little picket gang," the youth thought. "Well, I am all right now."

He let the horses come down to a slower gait presently.

Then he began going over the situation.

What he wished to do, more than anything else, was to overtake Bob, to find him, if he could, and warn him that the British would be on the lookout for him.

This would be a very difficult thing to do.

It would have been a hard task in the daytime.

At night, in the darkness, it would be ten times more difficult.

Dick had not asked Bob what road he intended taking in returning to the patriot army.

He figured, however, that Bob would return, as nearly as he could, by the same route they had traversed in coming down to the city.

"I will take it for granted, anyway," he thought; "and will shape my course accordingly."

Dick had been delayed at the home of Mr. Sanderson fifteen or twenty minutes.

That was long enough for the soldiers at the tavern, which was the headquarters of the British generals, to get a couple of horses and start to go to the British army to carry the information that a patriot spy would try to get through the lines.

Dick figured that these soldiers were in all probability ahead of him.

But he was mistaken.

The two soldiers he had knocked down and robbed of the horses had secured a couple of more animals and set out on their interrupted journey.

But they had not done this as promptly as Dick had supposed they would.

They had not got started away from the tavern until at least half an hour after Dick had made his escape.

So they were behind the youth, instead of in front of him.

Dick reckoned up the time that had elapsed since Bob started on his long walk from the city to Harlem Heights, a distance of about nine miles.

The youth figured it that about two hours had elapsed since he parted from Bob.

He considered about two miles an hour would be very good speed to make on such a dark night, walking over unfamiliar ground.



"I should overtake him a mile or so beyond Murray Hill," Dick thought. "Well, I will ride at a good speed, until I get where I should find him, and then I will signal him."

Dick and Bob had been raised together, their parents having lived on adjoining farms, near Tarrytown, for many years, and the youths had swam, hunted and fished together all their lives. Many a time, when out in the timber they would become separated, and in such circumstances they always made use of a signal, so as to learn the whereabouts of each other, and get together again.

This signal was a loud, strong whistle made by blowing in the hands, which were doubled up in a peculiar fashion. It was not like a whistle made with the tongue and lips alone, or with a couple of fingers in the mouth; it was more like the steam whistle of a miniature locomotive—only not so loud, of course.

The whistle could be heard a long ways, however; often the youths had communicated with each other by aid of whistled signals when a mile distant. In the timber, where everything is quiet, a sound may be heard much farther than out in the open, and where there are other distracting noises.

Dick kept his horse going at a gallop, until he had passed Murray Hill, and was a mile or so beyond, and then he slowed the animals down to a walk.

He brought the horses to a standstill.

"I believe I'll try signalling, and see if Bob is within a mile of this spot," he murmured.

Then he doubled up his hands, and blew a loud, shrill blast that awoke the echoes for a distance of a mile around.

"What in the name of all that is wonderful is that, anyway?" cried a hoarse voice from the side of the road. "Who comes there?"

"Redcoats!" thought Dick.

Then he kicked his horse in the ribs, and yelled to the other, and rode away up the road at a gallop.

Crack! crack! crack! crack! crack! went the muskets, and Dick heard the bullets whistle all around him.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### IN SEARCH OF BOB.

"The redcoats are thick in this part of the country!" thought Dick, as he rode onward.

He kept up the speed at which he was going till he had gone perhaps half a mile.

Then he brought the horses down to a walk. A short distance farther, and he brought the horses to a standstill.

"I wonder if Bob heard my signal?" he murmured.

He listened intently for a few minutes.

He heard nothing.

"I wonder if it is safe to whistle again?" he asked himself.

"Well, I must do it; it is the only way that I can find Bob.

He doubled up his hands and blew in them as he had done before, making a deep, penetrating whistle.

Then he listened intently for several minutes.

No whistle was heard in reply.

"Bob must have made better time than I thought," said Dick to himself. "Well, I'll ride onward, and stop every once in a while and signal. He is bound to hear me, soon or later."

But if Bob had not heard him, the two British soldiers coming along the road a half mile or so behind him, did. The pickets who had fired upon Dick heard him, also.

When the two soldiers reached them they were challenged, and this had occurred just before Dick whistled.

"What was that?" asked one of the soldiers on horseback.

"I can only tell you that it is some kind of a signal, given by utterance to by a man," was the reply. "He stopped right opposite us a few minutes ago, and gave that whistle.

It was the first we knew anyone was around, and it gave us quite a start. We challenged him, and he rode off at a gallop, as we could tell by the sound of the horses' feet. We fired a volley, but did not hit the fellow, it seems."

"I'll bet a horse it is the very same young rascal who stole our horses, after escaping from his captors, down at headquarters!" said one of the horsemen.

"And he's signalling to the other fellow who went ahead of him!" from the other.

They quickly related the story of the capture of Dick Slater—though they knew him as "Sam Sly, the boy spy."

"It's the very same chap, you can bet on it!" said one of the men on picket duty. "And, say, there is no reason why you couldn't capture him! He doesn't know you are behind him, and if he keeps on signalling for the other fellow, he will keep you posted as to where he is, and you can slip up on him, and take him prisoner."

"He's a bad man to fool with," said one of the horsemen, dubiously.

He remembered the terrible thump he had received from Dick's fist.



"Bah! You aren't afraid of a young fellow like him, are you?"

"No; I'm not afraid; but I know he is a dangerous fellow to fool with, all right."

"But you will have all the advantage on your side. He doesn't know you are after him, and will not be on his guard."

"I don't know about that. From what I have seen of him, he is almost always on his guard. A spy has to be, you know."

"Yes; that's true; but you will have the advantage. He will keep you informed of his whereabouts by those signals of his, and you will be able to capture him, if you are careful."

"We'll try it, anyway. Well, we'll be moving."

Then the soldiers rode away at a gallop.

The soldiers were eager to get revenge on Dick for the blows he had dealt them.

It would give them great pleasure if they could capture the boy spy.

It would be a big feather in their cap, too.

And some money in their pockets, as well.

They had heard General Howe say that he would give a hundred pounds to have the youth a prisoner in his hands.

He had told Luke Watson, the guide and spy, that he could receive a hundred pounds if he brought the youth to headquarters.

They felt confident the general would pay the money if they should be successful in bringing the boy spy to headquarters.

They made up their minds to capture the youth, if possible.

Meanwhile Dick, having listened for a few minutes, and receiving no answering signal from Bob, had ridden onward.

"I'll get within hearing distance of him pretty soon," thought.

Then the thought occurred to him that perhaps Bob had been captured.

He hoped not.

Somehow he could not think so.

He knew Bob was bright, alert and cunning, and he believed the redcoats would have hard work capturing him.

Dick rode onward half a mile, as near as he could guess, and paused, and emitted another of the signal whistles.

He listened a few moments, and then whistled again.

He listened again, and this time he heard a faint answering whistle.

It seemed to come from away over toward the left, but somewhat further north than where he was.

"That is Bob!" Dick exclaimed, in joyful accents. "Thank goodness, he hasn't been captured! Now to find him. He is evidently off the road, and is in the timber. Well, I must join him, even if he is in the wilderness. I can lead the horses, if need be."

Dick left the road, and entering the timber made his way slowly in the direction from which the whistle had sounded.

It was slow work, working his way through the timber.

He could not see his hand before his face.

The limbs of the trees struck him in the face, and fearing he might get his eyes put out, he dismounted, and led the horses.

He could go no faster than a slow walk, anyway.

He got along somewhat better after that.

"I don't see how Bob managed to get so far in such a short time," he thought; "he has made good speed."

Dick made his way along until he had gone a quarter of a mile or more, and then he stopped and emitted another signal-whistle.

Very soon the answering whistle came.

This time it sounded louder and plainer.

"I have come in the right direction so far," thought Dick. "I am nearer him than I was."

He started onward again.

He plodded along, dragging the unwilling horses after him, a distance of a third of a mile, perhaps, and then he paused, and whistled again.

Again he heard the answering signal, and it sounded still nearer and clearer.

"I am getting there by degrees," thought Dick.

Then he started again, and went another third of a mile before stopping.

He whistled and received an answer.

The answering signal was quite loud this time, and Dick felt sure that he would soon be with his friend.

He hastened forward as rapidly as was possible.

He was eager to be with Bob.

"I'll wager he is wondering why I followed him!" thought Dick. "Well, I can soon tell him."

Presently Dick paused and emitted another whistle, and from a short distance in front of him came the answering signal.

"Where are you, Bob?" called Dick, hastening forward as fast as he could.

"Here!" came back the reply, and at the sound of the voice he halted as if shot.



The boy spy had one peculiar faculty.

He had a very good memory for names, a splendid memory for faces, but the one thing in which he excelled was his memory of voices.

If Dick was familiar with a person's voice or laugh, he could tell it anywhere.

Even if he were not looking for a person, and thought the person was a hundred miles away, if he heard that person's voice, even though he did not see the speaker, he recognized the speaker instantly.

So when the reply, "Here!" came back to Dick, he stopped instantly, and stood motionless and silent, asking himself what he should do.

For the voice that had answered him was not that of Bob!

Dick knew this as well as if he had been face to face with the speaker in broad daylight.

He scented danger at once.

In an instant he realized intuitively that he had all but run straight into the arms of the British.

He had not stopped to think that there might be others in these woods who could whistle like himself and Bob.

He had taken it for granted, when he heard the answering signal, that it could not have been emitted by anyone save Bob.

Now, however, he knew better.

He realized his mistake.

But what was he to do?

He felt that he was in dangerous quarters.

He was, he judged, not more than seventy-five yards from the British.

Could he retreat, and get away from them?

He felt sure that he could easily do so alone, but to take the horses along would be a different affair.

Still, he would not give the horses up until he had to.

He wished to keep them.

He was ready to take desperate chances in order to do so.

Turning, he cautiously began to move away, pulling the horses along by the reins.

"Hello! where are you?" came from behind him but Dick made no reply.

He knew that the owner of the voice was a deadly enemy, and was not disposed to give him the information which he would no doubt have been glad to receive.

Dick hastened away as fast as he could, but this was not very fast.

The horses were becoming tired of being pulled along through the dark forest, this way and that.

Dick coaxed them along as best he could without making much noise.

Evidently the British soldiers—for such they really were, as Dick surmised—heard the snorts given vent to the horses, for excited voices were heard in the direction from which the man's voice had come when he addressed Dick.

"Stop!" called out a threatening voice; "stop where you are, or we will fire!"

Dick made no reply.

Nor did he stop.

Instead he turned almost at right angles, and led the horses off in the new direction, hoping to get out of range this way.

"Stop!" came the cry again; "stop, or we fire!"

Dick merely hastened onward, and then he heard the voice give the command:

"Fire!"

Crash!

Dick judged that a score of muskets, at least, had been fired.

In the timber, and amid the stillness of the night, the weapons roared like cannon.

The report was almost deafening.

The horses leaped and snorted in terror.

Luckily the reverberations of the reports among the trees and hills smothered the noise made by the horses.

None of the bullets from the muskets came near enough to Dick for him to hear them.

His quick movement at right angles with the course he had been going was what had saved him.

Otherwise he could hardly have escaped being hit by some of the bullets.

"Scatter, men! scatter in all directions!" Dick heard the man cry. "We must not let that fellow escape! He is undoubtedly a rebel spy. Hunt him down!"

## CHAPTER IX.

### A BOLD DASH.

Dick was now in a tight place.

Handicapped as he was by the horses, he could not move rapidly.

Nor could he move so silently as he could have done alone.

Nor could he conceal himself should some of the soldiers happen to come too close to where he was.



rather, he could not conceal the horses, and they would reveal his whereabouts.

The best thing, the safest thing for him to do would be to desert the horses.

But Dick did not wish to do this.

He had taken a liking to the animals.

He had made up his mind to hold onto them, and get them into the American camp if he could.

The horses would be of value.

So he did not wish to give them up.

In fact, he made up his mind that he would not give them up until he was forced to do so.

So he hastened onward as fast as he could, still leading the horses.

He hoped to be able to evade the redcoats who were searching for him so assiduously.

This would be very difficult.

The soldiers had undoubtedly scattered, and were prowling here, there and everywhere.

He was liable to run up against one or more of the fellows at any moment.

Dick was on the alert.

He led the horses with his left hand, and kept his right hand on the butt of a pistol.

He was determined to escape and woe to the redcoat who attempted to hinder him.

Occasionally Dick paused and listened.

On such occasions he could hear the soldiers in various positions.

He could hear them beating about in the underbrush, and he could also hear them calling to one another.

"They are trying to surround and hem me in," the youth thought. "Well, we will see about that! I'll get out of this trap in some manner."

Suddenly Dick stopped as if he had been shot.

He had heard a peculiar sound, which to his practised ear was a signal.

It was the call of a night bird.

Dick knew it was given utterance to by human

voice. "It was made by Bob!" the youth thought; "and it came from the direction of the spot where those redcoats were. Can it be that Bob is a prisoner in their hands?" Dick was worried.

"It would be bad!" he murmured. "Anyway, I must see. If he is in their hands, I must try to rescue him."

Dick, to decide was to act.

He turned squarely around, and started back in the di-

rection of the point where the redcoats had been when they challenged him.

The youth knew he was taking long chances in doing this.

He was, seemingly, running right back into the lion's den.

But he did not hesitate.

If Bob was in danger he must go to his friend's assistance.

He knew Bob would do the same for him.

The youth made his way along, pulling the horses after him.

Doubtless they wondered what all this wandering about in the depths of the forest meant.

Dick paused frequently to listen, and he was pleased to note that he did not seem to be getting into closer quarters by taking the back track.

Perhaps this would turn out to be the safer plan, after all.

The redcoats would naturally think he would keep on going away from them, and get as far from where he had been challenged as possible.

This was what most persons would do.

Dick would have done so, too, had he not heard the signal from Bob—for he was confident it was a signal.

Presently he paused, and cautiously gave the call to the night bird.

"If that is answered, I shall know it is Bob," he thought.

The signal was answered at once.

"It is Bob!" thought Dick; "and I am afraid he is a prisoner."

The youth started forward once more.

The signal had seemed to come from a point considerably nearer than when he heard it the first time.

"I have come in the right direction," murmured Dick.

"Well, if I am not pounced upon by some of the redcoats, I will be with Bob in a few minutes."

Dick started forward again.

"If Bob is a prisoner, he must be alone at this time,"

Dick reasoned; "otherwise he would not have dared give utterance to the signal."

This thought caused Dick to hasten forward more rapidly than ever.

If he could reach Bob before any of the redcoats returned, he could free his friend, and they could flee together.

Presently he emitted the call of the night bird once more, and received an answer from right in front of him.



"Is that you, Dick?" came in a cautious voice.

"Yes; and you—are you a prisoner, Bob?"

"Yes; but my guard went off to search for you. Hurry and free me before they get back!"

Dick hastened forward.

Guided by Bob's voice, he was soon at his friend's side.

Bob was tied hand and foot with ropes.

Dick drew his knife and quickly cut the ropes.

Then Bob leaped to his feet with a sigh of relief.

"I feel better!" he murmured. "But we must get away from here. Those redcoats will be coming back in a few minutes."

"Did they get the paper you were taking to the commander-in-chief, Bob?" asked Dick, anxiously.

"No, I dropped it behind a tree, near by, Dick. I can find it."

"Hurry, then! We must get away from here!"

Bob hastened to make search for the document.

Presently a low exclamation of satisfaction escaped him.

"I have found it!" he said, and he rejoined Dick.

"Where did you get the horses?" he asked in surprise.

"I'll tell you later; just now we must put in all our time getting out of this. Take the reins of one of the horses, Bob."

Bob did so.

"Now follow me," and Dick started away through the forest.

As they started, they heard the voices of a number of redcoats, who were evidently returning from their unsuccessful search for Dick.

"They're coming!" said Bob, in a low tone.

"Yes; but we will get away, or know the reason why!"

The youths hastened onward.

The horses were not very willing to be led, but very good speed, everything considered, was made.

They had gone from fifty to seventy-five yards when a wild yell of rage and amazement was heard.

It came from the throats of the redcoats.

They had got back, and had discovered the escape of their prisoner.

The youths hastened their footsteps.

They knew that now the redcoats would be worked up to a high pitch of anger.

They would suspect what had happened, at once.

To miss finding and capturing Dick was bad enough, but to realize that the fellow they had been hunting had evaded

them, visited their temporary camp and freed their prisoner was almost more than they could endure.

They would do their best to recapture the escaped prisoner, and the person who had freed him.

Again the redcoats scattered, as the youths could tell by the sounds of their voices as they shouted to one another.

They were wild to find the prisoner and his friend.

"They are mad, Dick!" said Bob, with a chuckle.

"So they are, Bob!"

"They'll give us a hot chase!"

"Yes; we will have to move lively, if we want to get from them."

"The horses make it slow work for us."

"Yes, but if we can get out of this timber, we will be able to move more lively."

"That's right; once in an open road, and we can get them behind."

"So we can!"

The youths said no more.

They buckled down to the work in hand.

It was difficult work to make progress through the timber in the darkness.

But they persevered.

They were youths not easily daunted.

They were determined to escape.

They would carry the document they had received from Mr. Sanderson to the commander-in-chief of the party, or die trying.

And the redcoats seemed just as determined to recapture their escaped prisoner, and his friend with him.

They were beating the brush for their intended prey with desperate energy.

They labored under difficulties, however.

The darkness was a handicap to them.

They could not see their hands before their faces.

They had to depend on feeling about, and listening to the sounds made by the fugitives.

This made their work very difficult.

They might be within five feet of the persons they were hunting, and not know it.

The youths realized this, and were careful to make as little noise as possible.

"We'll get away from them yet!" said Dick, in a low voice.

"I think so, old man," was the cautious reply.

"Oh, you do, do you?" cried a triumphant voice right in front of them. "At them, men! Seize the spy!"

"Fire, Bob!" cried Dick.



At the same instant he drew a pistol and fired in the direction of the voice.

Bob followed suit.

"Again, Bob!" cried Dick, as he thrust the pistol back and drew the other.

Then two more shots rang out, and cries and groans came from in front of them.

Then they were leaped upon by several redcoats.

The youths were desperate, now, however.

They were determined not to be captured.

They used their pistols as clubs, and struck their assailants over the heads with them.

It was a short, but fierce encounter.

The desperate resistance of the two had been in a manner expected.

There were five or six of the redcoats, and they thought that their numbers would give them a victory without the necessity of their striking a blow.

The pistol shots from the weapons of the youths had come as a surprise to them.

They had not expected this.

Three of their number had fallen, with bullets in their sides.

The others, angry on account of the turn affairs had taken, had then leaped upon the two.

Here again they had met their matches.

The youths clubbed the pistols and thumped their assailants over the head, and soon had them reduced to a condition of insensibility.

The other redcoats had heard the firing, and the sounds of the struggle, however.

Shouts were given utterance to by them, as they came running toward the scene of the encounter.

Dick and Bob knew they had no time to lose.

They succeeded in getting hold of the bridle reins, and rode away from the spot, leading the horses.

The animals had not wandered away during the melee. Doubtless they were glad of a chance to stand still for a while.

They had been pulled about so long that they had become weary of it.

But they were now forced to follow the youths once more. The redcoats, yelling and evidently greatly excited, were approaching quite rapidly, but the two youths felt that they would be able to escape after all, as the redcoats would be tired for awhile when they reached their companions, who had been knocked senseless by the pistol butts.

This proved to be the case, and Dick and Bob gradually

drew away, until the sounds made by the redcoats could be heard but faintly.

The youths did not pause until they reached the old Post Road.

This was the road Dick had left an hour before, when he received the answer to his signal whistle.

They paused and listened before entering the road.

They could not hear a sound anywhere.

They decided that the coast was clear at last.

Then they entered the road, mounted the horses, and rode away toward the north.

Now, for the first time, they began to feel safe.

"Now, tell me how you came to be captured, Bob?" said Dick, as they rode along.

"It is very simple," the youth replied; "I was making my way through the timber, and suddenly I found that I was in the midst of a band of redcoats. They were all around me, calling on me to surrender. I knew I couldn't fight against the whole crowd successfully, and so I took the paper out of my pocket and dropped it behind a tree. Then I surrendered, and was tied up tight and fast as you found me."

"Did they try to make you tell who and what you were?"

"Yes; but I didn't give them any satisfaction."

"Who answered my signal?"

"One of the redcoats. As soon as they heard the whistle, they said it must be from some friend of mine, and one of them answered it. They kept it up, and came very near tricking you into being captured."

"So they did. I knew it wasn't your voice, when the fellow answered me, however."

"I would have cried out and warned you, but one of the scoundrels kept his hand over my mouth and I could not utter a sound."

"It was a pretty smooth trick, but it didn't win."

"No; we are free from those fellows; but we have the main lines still ahead of us."

"Yes; that is where we are going to have trouble."

"You are right."

The youths followed the Post Road, and made good time.

They were not challenged anywhere along the route, and at last they crossed Harlem Creek, and as soon as they came up onto the higher ground they were in sight of the campfires of the entire British army.

The army was half a mile distant, however, and they rode onward.

When they were within three hundred yards of the army,



the youths halted their horses, and sat in silence for a few moments.

They were looking at the campfires, watching the men sitting about—for not all had gone to bed—and wondering how they were going to get through the lines.

"How are we going to do it, Dick?" asked Bob, in a low tone.

"I hardly know, Bob; I'll tell you what I have half a mind to try, however."

"What?"

"The boldest thing we could possibly try."

"You mean——"

"To urge our horses to a full run, and ride through the British lines like twin thunderbolts!"

"Say, that is a bold scheme, sure enough!"

"But bold schemes sometimes win, where any other would fail."

"That's so; we might succeed, old man."

"We will be through the lines before they know what is taking place; and if they fire upon us, they will fire wildly, and at random, and if they were to hit us, it would be an accident."

"True; well, I'm willing to try it, if you are!"

"Very well; let's make the attempt. Keep right alongside of me. Are you ready?"

"Ready!" in a grim tone.

"All right; forward, then!"

The next instant the two bold youths lashed their horses to a gallop, and then into a run, and rode down upon the lines of the British army like twin thunderbolts, sure enough.

It was a desperate undertaking, but the boy spies were not to be deterred by any considerations for their own safety.

They were utterly and absolutely fearless.

## CHAPTER X.

### THROUGH THE LINES.

Forward they rode.

The clatter of the horses' hoofs on the ground sounded like the roar of distant thunder.

The sentinels, and the soldiers about the fires heard the sound and leaped to their feet in alarm.

"What could it be?" they asked themselves.

They were soon to learn.

The next instant two horsemen, riding like the wind, were among them,

Redcoats were knocked down by the horses in their mad rush.

Then ensued a scene of confusion.

There were shouts, yells, curses.

Many soldiers leaped for their muskets.

Seizing the weapons, they fired at the youths on the back.

They fired too quickly, however.

They did not stop to try to take aim.

Firing at random, they missed.

The youths heard the bullets whistle, but did not care that.

They uttered shouts of defiance.

They felt that their plan was destined to succeed.

The redcoats were taken entirely by surprise.

Consequently there was nothing that they could do of, at once, that would aid them in stopping the youths.

The shots fired at the two were the best the redcoats could do.

And, as we have seen, these shots went wild.

In a few seconds it seemed as if the entire British army was aroused.

Soldiers, half-dressed, came pouring out of their tents with muskets in hand.

They thought that they were attacked by the entire patriot army.

Some of them, in their excitement, and being aroused from sleep, mistook some of their companions for the patriot soldiers, and fired upon them before discovering their mistake.

Confusion reigned supreme.

The camp was in an uproar.

Men shouted, yelled and cursed.

It was a terrible mix-up.

If the youths had made it up to create as big a sensation as possible, they could not have succeeded better.

It is doubtful if two persons ever succeeded in causing a bigger disturbance in the same length of time than and Bob caused.

The horses were frightened, and after the uproar commenced there was no difficulty in getting them to move rapidly.

They needed no urging.

They raced with all their might.

The youths had to hold them in, instead of urging them forward.

They were through the lines of the British in less time than it has taken to tell of it.

And then they raced onward, toward Harlem Heights, exulting over the success of their bold dash.



It had succeeded beyond their most sanguine expectations.

A few minutes later they reached the patriot army.

They were challenged, and gave the countersign.

They were allowed to pass on into the camp, and they found that it was fully aroused.

The pickets had reported that some kind of excitement was going on in the British lines, and, fearing an attack, the patriot army had been aroused, and with arms in hands the soldiers were waiting for the approach of the redcoats.

When they learned that it was the youths who had caused the disturbance in the British ranks, the patriots were amazed.

It did not seem possible that the two youths had dared to go through the lines of the entire British army.

They could hardly believe that such a thing could be done.

Yet they knew Dick well, and they knew he was not a youth who would say a thing unless it was so.

"It was just like poking a stick into a hornet's nest," laughed Bob; "they swarmed out of their tents. I thought they were goners, sure."

"We took them by surprise, or we would never have been able to get through the lines," said Dick.

"I should say not!" remarked one of the patriot officers. "That was the most daring feat that I ever heard of!"

"Well, we had to get through, and we figured it that we could stand a better chance by making a bold dash than by trying to slip through."

"Perhaps you were right about that."

The commander-in-chief had been aroused when the news of the disturbance in the British camp was carried to him, and he sent for Dick and Bob at once, on learning that they had returned from their trip down into the city.

He greeted the youths pleasantly, and there was an eager look in his eyes as he asked:

"What luck, my boys?"

"I think we had good luck, your excellency," said Dick, "though we do not ourselves know the nature of the information which we have brought."

The commander-in-chief looked puzzled.

"I do not understand," he said.

"We brought a statement from a patriot with whom we were in contact down in the city," explained Dick; "we do not know the contents of the paper, but the writer assured us that it contained a detailed statement of the plans of the British, as they have so far been outlined."

Then he told the story of their adventures down in the

city, in as few words as possible, and Bob produced the document and handed it to the general.

The commander-in-chief opened the paper, and read it through from beginning to end before looking up.

There was a pleased look on his face when he did look up.

"Boys," he said impressively, "you have done well. The information contained in this communication is very valuable indeed. I shall know what to expect, and what I have to guard against from the enemy."

"We are glad if we have been of benefit to you, sir," said Dick; "and we stand ready to do more work in the same line, at any time."

"Thank you, my boys! It will not be necessary to do anything more right away, I am confident. If anything should transpire to make it necessary, however, I will send for you."

"Thank you, sir!" said Dick, and Bob echoed this remark.

Then the youths bade the commander-in-chief good night, and went to their quarters.

They found the "Liberty Boys" eager and excited.

They had heard just enough regarding the wonderful exploit of Dick and Bob in riding like whirlwinds through the entire British army to make them wish to hear the complete story, and they would not let the youths sleep until after they had told the story of their night's adventures.

"Well, you two chaps are world-beaters!" said Mark Morrison, admiringly, and the rest of the "Liberty Boys" echoed this sentiment.

The youths lay down, presently, and got a few hours sleep before morning.

Next day an orderly came to Dick, and told him the commander-in-chief wished to see him at headquarters at once.

The youth made his way to headquarters, and was greeted cordially by the commander-in-chief.

"In the communication which you brought me last night," said the general, "the information was vouchsafed that the British contemplate sending a large force up the East River to Throg's Neck, where they intend to land, and then come across and cut off our retreat in case we wish to leave this point and retire toward Connecticut. I am going to send a force to guard this point, and as there will likely be some fighting when the British reach there, and as your brave 'Liberty Boys' seem to desire to be always where there is fighting going on, I have sent for you to tell you that your company shall go along, if you wish it. If



you do not wish to go, you may remain here. I leave it to you to say."

"We will go, your excellency. If that movement is contemplated, there will be no real attack from the front."

"You are right, my boy," agreed the commander-in-chief. "And, now that you are going with the division that goes to Throg's Neck, I will depute to you the work of bringing me immediate information of the approach of the British, as soon as you learn that they are advancing on that point."

"Very well, sir; I will see to it that you are informed of the advance of the British promptly."

That afternoon a large force moved to the vicinity of Throg's Neck and took up its position there.

Two or three bridges which spanned the creek which separated Throg's Neck from the mainland were destroyed, and it would be hard work for the British to land their troops on the mainland when they should come.

On the Twelfth of October the British force appeared coming up the East River, and Dick at once mounted his horse—a splendid animal that he had captured on Long Island—and rode across the country to Harlem Heights.

"The British are coming up the river, your excellency!" he said, on appearing before the commander-in-chief, and after receiving instructions he made his way out and had remounted, when General Washington came out and said to him:

"Tell General Putnam to hold them in check as long as possible. We must have time to retreat; tell him we will retire to White Plains."

"Very well, your excellency," said Dick, and then after listening to a few more instructions, he saluted and rode away in the direction of Throg's Neck.

As he did so the sound of firing could be heard in the distance.

"The fight is on!" he murmured, and he urged his gallant horse to its best speed.

When he reached there, he found the patriot army in full control of affairs.

It was master of the situation.

The British would have to land the army on the Neck, and then wade across a strip of marshy land, and in the face of the fire from the Americans this would be a dangerous thing to do.

They would almost mire at every step, and would be the best of marks for the patriot sharpshooters.

Dick delivered General Washington's message to General Putnam, and that worthy chuckled as he said:

"We will hold them in check, all right! The com-

mander-in-chief can take his time in retiring to White Plains!"

This proved to be true.

The British tried to reach the shore, but were met such a galling fire from the muskets of the patriot soldiers that they were forced to retreat.

This was kept up for six days, the British being held in check easily, and then, a messenger having brought news that the entire patriot army had reached White Plains, General Putnam gave the order to retreat.

He thought it best to wait till after dark, however, and did so, and next morning the British were astonished to see that the "rebels" had departed.

Next morning, after reaching White Plains, Dick and Bob asked for leave of absence for a few hours, to ride to Tarrytown, only seven miles distant, to see their friends.

Leave was granted them, and they rode away at a gallop.

An hour and a half's ride brought them to their friends, and their folks were glad to see them.

Especially was this true of Alice Estabrook, Bob's sister, and Edith Slater, Dick's sister, for the youths were in love with each other's sister.

The youths stayed to dinner, and at about three o'clock started on their return to White Plains.

They had gone perhaps halfway, when as they were riding down a steep hill a band of redcoats leaped out from the road from among the trees, and, presenting their muskets, ordered the youths to halt.

The youths did so at once.

It would have been to invite sure death had they refused.

They would obey for the time being, and bide their time.

An opportunity to make a break for freedom might soon come.

Dick had scanned the faces of the redcoats eagerly, and once.

He wished to see if there were any of the redcoats who would recognize him.

The youths were riding two horses that they had captured from the British.

When they had captured the horses they had on saddles and bridles that might have been recognized as being British make, but these trappings the youths had, had left off, and they had on common farm bridles and saddles.

"Who are you fellows, and where are you going?" asked the commander of the redcoats in a stern voice.



"D—don't s—shoot, mister!" said Dick, pretending to be badly frightened.

"We won't shoot you, if you answer our questions promptly and truthfully," was the reply. "Who are you, and where are you going?"

"We are Dick and Bob, sir," replied Dick, in as simple manner as possible; "and we are goin' to White Plains."

"What are you going there for?"

"For—for fun, sir. W—we jest wanter see whut a army looks like."

"Oh, that's it?"

"Y—yes, sir. We heerd as how Ginerel Washington's army was to White Plains, and so Bob and me, we made up our minds we would go over there and see whut a army looked like."

"Exactly; what are you, rebels?"

"Who, us?" inquired Dick, with an assumption of surprise and anger; "no, sir-ree! we hain't no rebels, we ain't. We're good king's men, we are!"

The commander of the squad of redcoats looked at the youths in a speculative manner.

"Well," he said, presently, with a smile, "if you are good king's men, you want to be careful how you talk when you are anywhere around the rebel army. They will string you up, as like as not!"

"Oh, we'll keep still!" said Dick, looking wise; "we're so smart fur them there rebels, we are!"

"I don't doubt that you are smart enough to fool the rebels, all right," the officer said; "and now, I have a little proposition to make to you. As you are loyal king's men, you ought to be willing to agree to do what I wish you to do."

"Whut do ye want us to do, sir?"

"I want you to go to White Plains, take a look at the army, and then come back here and tell me all about it. Tell me where the army is stationed, and everything you see. Will you do it?"

"Of course we will!" replied Dick, with alacrity. "And I'll be here when we come back?"

"Yes; we'll stay right here. You won't be gone very long, will you?"

"No; not very long. We'll come back jest as quick as we can, to oblige ye."

"All right; now go ahead—and remember, find out all you can regarding the rebel army."

"Say, Bob, I've got a scheme!" said Dick, as soon as they were out of hearing of the redcoats.

"What is your plan, Dick?"

"To hurry to the camp, get our 'Liberty Boys' and come back and capture that gang of redcoats!"

Bob started, and his face lighted up.

"Say, that is a good scheme!" he exclaimed. "Let's do it!"

The youths rode to the camp, and Dick communicated his plan to the "Liberty Boys."

Dick went to the commander-in-chief and asked permission to make the attempt.

This was readily granted, and a short time afterward the company of "Liberty Boys" set out.

The youths were perfectly familiar with the country, having hunted over all the land hereabouts, and they knew how to go in order to approach the band of redcoats from the rear.

They executed the maneuver successfully, and were within a few yards of the British before they were discovered.

Then Dick and his brave "Liberty Boys" leaped forward, with muskets leveled.

"Surrender!" cried Dick, in a ringing voice; "surrender, or die!"

The redcoats saw that they were outnumbered three to one, and surrendered, as they realized that it would be death to all of them if they refused.

The chagrin of the commander of the redcoats when he saw that the leaders of the "rebels" were the youths whom he had taken to be country bumpkins was great. He looked as if he would have liked to kick himself.

"You wanted us to find out all we could about the patriot army and come and tell you about it," said Dick, with a grim smile; "and fearing that we could not do it satisfactorily, we decided to come and bring you there, so that you could see for yourself!"

General Washington was highly pleased when the company of "Liberty Boys" came into camp, bringing the redcoats with them as prisoners, and he complimented the youths in decided terms.

"Just keep on the way you are going," he said. "You are doing good work for the Cause of Liberty!"

#### THE END.

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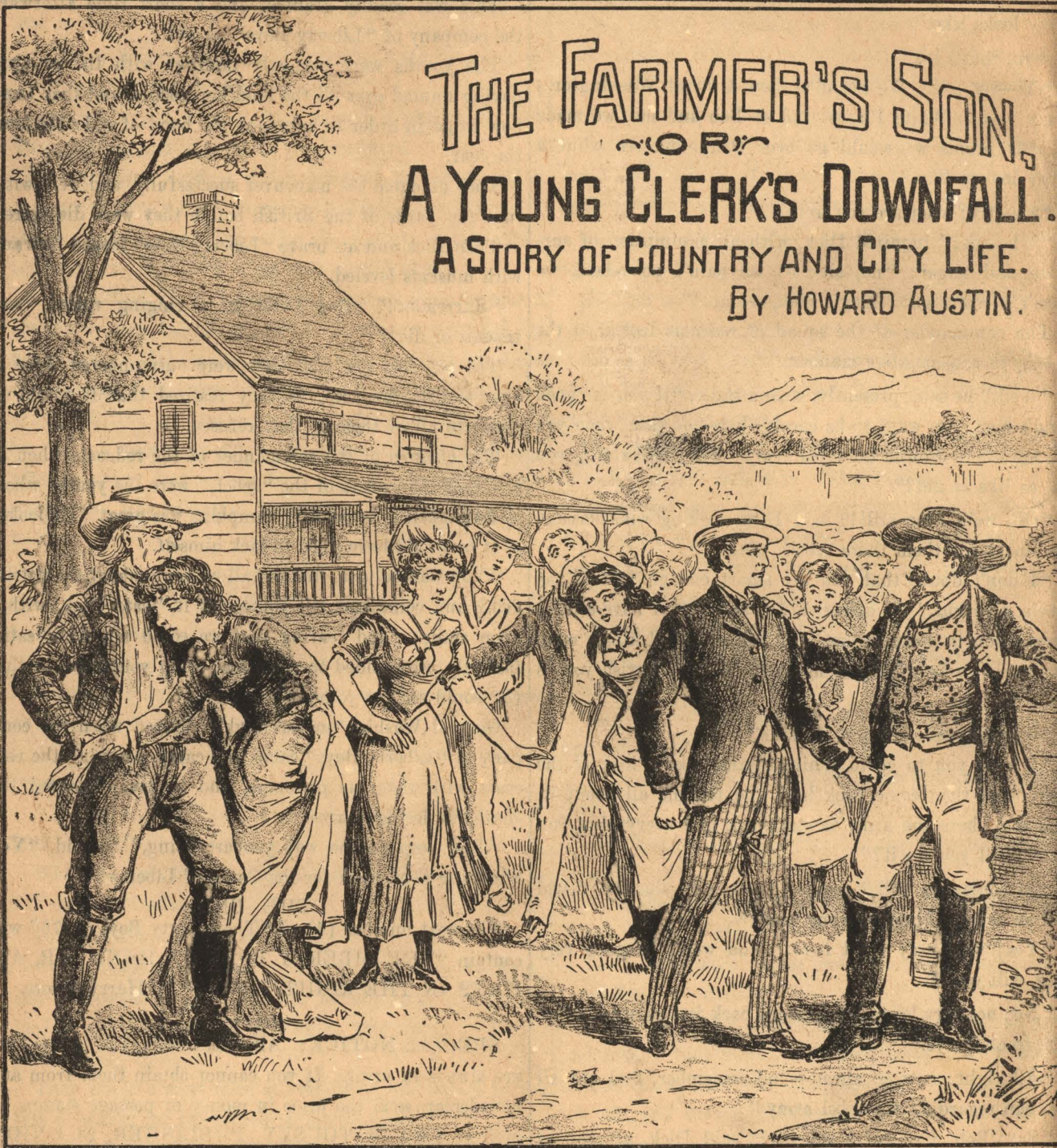
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